

1. In a network environment that includes a public network such as the Internet and a private corporate network contained in the public network, the public network including a client external to the private corporate network, a method of a communications device of the external client establishing a secure connection over a public network to the private corporate network without restricting the communications device to working through the private corporate network, the method comprising the following;

a specific act of the external client establishing a connection with the private corporate network over the public network using the communication device;

a specific act of the external client providing security to the connection;

a specific act of the external client maintaining a session that uses the secure connection to communicate with the private corporate network; and

during at least a portion of the specific act of the external client maintaining a session that uses the secure connection, a specific act of the communication device retaining the ability to establish a separate and distinct connection with another resource outside of the private corporate network.

2. A method in accordance with Claim 1, further comprising:

during at least a portion of the specific act of the external client maintaining a session that uses the secure connection, a specific act of establish a connection with the resource outside of the private corporate network.

3. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the specific act of the external client establishing a connection with the private corporate network comprises:

a specific act of using Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) to establish a connection with the private corporate network.

4. A method in accordance with Claim 3, wherein the specific act of the external client providing security to the connection comprises:

a specific act of the external client using a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) protocol to provide security to the connection.

5. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the specific act of the external client providing security to the connection comprises:

a specific act of implementing a security protocol that resides at or above a socket layer in the protocol stack used to communicate data from the external client to the private corporate network.

6. A method in accordance with Claim 5, wherein the specific act of the external client providing security to the connection comprises:

a specific act of the external client using a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) protocol to provide security to the connection.

7. A method in accordance with Claim 5, wherein the specific act of the external client providing security to the connection comprises:

a specific act of the external client using a Wireless Transport Layer Security (WTLS) to provide security to the connection.

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8. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the specific act of the external client establishing a connection with the private corporate network comprises:
- a specific act of the external client establishing a connection with a Virtual Privacy Network (VPN) access server in the private corporate network.
9. A method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the VPN access server is implemented on the same server machine as a proxy server that serves the private corporate network.
10. A method in accordance with Claim 8, wherein the VPN access server is implemented on a different server machine than a proxy server that serves the private corporate network.
11. A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the public network comprises portions of the Internet.

12. In a computer program product for use in a network environment that includes a public network such as the Internet and a private corporate network contained in the public network, the public network including a client external to the private corporate network, the computer program product for implementing a method of a communications device of the external client establishing a secure connection over a public network to the private corporate network without restricting the communications device to working through the private corporate network, the computer program product including a computer-readable medium having stored thereon computer-executable instructions for performing the following;

a specific act of the external client establishing a connection with the private corporate network over the public network using the communication device;

a specific act of the external client providing security to the connection;

a specific act of the external client maintaining a session that uses the secure connection to communicate with the private corporate network; and

during at least a portion of the specific act of the external client maintaining a session that uses the secure connection, a specific act of the communication device retaining the ability to establish a separate and distinct connection with another resource outside of the private corporate network.

13. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the computer-readable media comprises a tangible computer readable medium.

14. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the computer-executable instructions for performing the specific act of the external client

1 establishing a connection with the private corporate network comprises a Transmission
2 Control Protocol (TCP) module.

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4 15. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 14, wherein the
5 computer-executable instructions for performing a specific act of the external client
6 providing security to the connection comprises a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) module.

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8 16. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the
9 computer-executable instructions for performing a specific act of the external client
10 providing security to the connection comprises a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) module.

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12 17. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the
13 computer-executable instructions for performing a specific act of the external client
14 providing security to the connection comprises a Wireless Transport Layer Security
15 (WTLS) module.

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17 18. A computer program product in accordance with Claim 12, wherein the
18 computer-executable instructions for performing a specific act of the external client
19 providing security to the connection comprises a module that reside at or above the socket
20 layer in a protocol stack.

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21. A method in accordance with Claim 11, wherein the public network comprises portions of the Internet.

1 22. In a network environment that includes a public network such as the
2 Internet and a private corporate network contained in the public network, the public
3 network including a client external to the private corporate network, a method of a server
4 computer system within a private corporate network establishing a secure connection with
5 a communications device of the external client without restricting the communications
6 device to working through the private corporate network, the method comprising the
7 following;

8 a specific act of the server computer system facilitating the establishment of
9 a connection with the external client over the public network;

10 a specific act of the server computer system facilitating the providing of
11 security to the connection, wherein the secure connection is established while
12 allowing the external client to maintain the ability to establish a separate and
13 distinct connection.

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15 23. A method in accordance with Claim 22, wherein the server computer
16 system comprises a Virtual Private Network (VPN) server in the private corporate
17 network.

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19 24. A method in accordance with Claim 22, wherein the specific act of the
20 server computer system facilitating the establishment of a connection with the external
21 client comprises:

22 a specific act of using Transmission Control Protocol (TCP), to facilitate the
23 establishment of a connection with the external client.
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25. A method in accordance with Claim 22, wherein the specific act of the
server computer system facilitating the providing of security to the connection comprises:
a specific act of using Secure Socket Layer (SSL), to facilitate the providing
of security to the connection.

26. A method in accordance with Claim 22, wherein the specific act of the
server computer system facilitating the providing of security to the connection comprises:
a specific act of using Wireless Transport Layer Security (WTLS), to
facilitate the providing of security to the connection.